The Psychology of Social Movements by Hadley Cantril
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Social Service Review, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Jun., 1942), pp. 365-366
Published by: The University of Chicago Press
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/30013924
Accessed: 28/06/2014 11:28

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definite leanings toward the encouragement of thrift and the provision of training and employment. "At the turn of the century, charity was something more than a simple religious act. The poor had evolved into a social problem, the solution of which lay not in almsgiving, but in an organized program of social work" (p. 158).

This chapter on "Charities" represents a successful effort to show the changed thinking with respect to combating the problems of destitution; the change from unorganized to organized charitable effort, with increased emphasis on educational and preventive methods to supplement direct relief.

ALBERT GOLDSTEIN

ASSOCIATED JEWISH CHARITIES OF BALTIMORE

The Psychology of Social Movements. By HADLEY CANTRIL. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1941. Pp. xv+274. $2.75.

One of the hopeful signs of increasing maturity in the social sciences is the extent to which writers on special problems start with an explanation of the concepts that have guided their thinking. This book is an excellent illustration of the tendency. Its first quarter is devoted to the development of an analytical scheme, which is then applied in turn to a lynching mob and to such diverse social movements as the kingdom of Father Divine, the Oxford Group, the Townsend Plan, and German National Socialism. Following the principle of scientific parsimony, as few concepts as possible have been employed, and they are presented with such clarity and readability as to be intelligible even to one who has little acquaintance with present-day psychological research.

Professor Cantril accepts as his basic hypotheses that the psychological explanation of social movements is to be found in the suggestibility of masses of people and that the conditions determining individual differences in suggestibility must therefore be established. He presents the individual as an active agent selecting from his cultural environment the standards of judgment, frames of reference, and attitudes which, interiorized, make up his mental context. There are wide variations, however, among individuals even in the same culture as to what attitudes are selected for introception, the extent to which they are really understood and firmly integrated, and the intensity with which they involve the ego. With regard to motivation, Professor Cantril stresses, as most nearly adequate for his interpretation, the drive to maintain and enhance self-regard and the desire to find meaning in life and indicates the conditions that so often frustrate these drives and thus produce discontent. He describes the critical situation when an individual is confronted with a chaotic external environment which he wants to interpret and cannot. He chooses as the chief barrier to satisfying interpretation, and therefore as the chief condition for suggestibility, the lack of adequate mental context for the development of critical ability in dealing with such critical situations. This brief summary does not do justice to Pro-

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fessor Cantril's carefully developed schematic framework and is intended only to indicate the ground covered.

The discussion of each of the social movements is prefaced by an account of its development, highly selective as to factual material and vividly told. The movement is then interpreted in terms of the needs of its adherents and the satisfactions which it brings to them. Autobiographical material is used to illuminate the personal impact of crises and their resolution.

The tests of such a conceptual scheme as Professor Cantril presents are whether it can be applied to a wide variety of real situations and whether the analysis deepens the reader's understanding of the phenomena studied. Both tests are passed successfully, especially with respect to the two religious movements and to Townsendism. While the analysis throws new light also on lynching and on the motivations of the very diverse groups who aided the rise to power of the National Socialist party, it leaves a stronger impression of unexplored areas in the psychology of both movements. Here a single type of analysis appears less adequate and parsimony seems more nearly synonymous with oversimplification. Perhaps the chief quarrel with Professor Cantril is over the title of his book. He would have disarmed all critics if he had substituted in it "a" for "the."

The book should be particularly interesting to social workers in that it summarizes in nontechnical and highly readable style a good deal of the thinking being done at the point where sociology, anthropology, and social psychology meet and because it presents a conceptual scheme emphasizing the cultural elements in human behavior unstressed ordinarily in psychoanalysis and psychiatry.

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BRIEF NOTICES

The Mobilization of the Home Front: A Report of the American Public Welfare Association. By ERIC H. BIDDLE. (Public Administration Service Publication No. 81.) Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1942. Pp. 47. $0.60.

This very useful publication provides a brief account of the extraordinary organization of community forces achieved in England since the onset of the war. At numerous points the author suggests the way in which similar situations will probably have to be met in the United States as our war effort accelerates.

Mobilization of man-power in countries dedicated to the principle of maximum freedom for the individual presents numerous special problems. In England the program of unusual measures required to meet the emergency has been worked out in joint conferences in which those most vitally affected have participated. As a result, resistance to unaccustomed infringements on personal liberty has been negligible. By mid-1941, for example, there had been only thirty-two prosecutions for refusals to accept transfer

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